

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1754

ANSWERED ON:08.03.2016

Endangered Species

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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the number of threatened/endangered species of flora and fauna including birds in the country have been increasing over the years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor, species and State-wise;
- (c) the number of species currently included in the red list of threatened species published by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN);
- (d) whether the Government has conducted any study for identifying endangered species of animals and birds in the country in order to save them from becoming extinct and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps including legal measures taken by the Government for conservation of threatened/endangered species and the funds allocated /released and utilised for the same purpose during each of the last three years along with the steps being taken for recovery of critically endangered species of animals and birds in the country ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (d) The Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and Zoological Survey of India(ZSI) under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change conduct survey of threatened and important species of the country. As per the data available with BSI, out of 19156 species of vascular plants (Angiosperms, Gymnosperms, Pteridophytes) from various surveys carried out in the country, 1236 species belong to different threatened categories like Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable. BSI has prepared a state wise list of threatened plants for notification under section 38 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 for prohibiting and regulating their collection from wild.

Studies conducted by ZSI have recorded over 96,000 species of animals from India. Among this, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has assessed 18 species of amphibians, 14 fishes, 13 bird species and 10 mammals as Critically Endangered and 310 species as endangered, including 69 fishes, 38 mammals and 32 amphibians.

The census of large animals like tiger is undertaken at the national level once every four years and census of a few other major flagship species is undertaken at the State-level by the respective State/Union Territory governments. As per the latest census, the estimated population of tiger, elephant, lion and rhinoceros as received from the States Governments however, indicates increase in their population.

The threats on plants and animals in India, a mega diverse country, is mainly because of habitat fragmentation and degradation of ecosystem. Huge biotech pressure on the flora and fauna compounds the situation.

(e) Towards conservation of threatened species, the Government of India has established a Protected Area (PAs) network (730 PAs including 103 National Parks, 535 Wildlife Sanctuaries, 26 Community Reserves, and 66 Conservation Reserves in different biogeographic regions), which primarily covers habitats of threatened megafauna such as tiger, rhino, elephant, etc. Moreover 9 of the 18 Biosphere Reserves in India are part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves of UNESCO.

Biological Diversity Act, 2002, was inter-alia enacted to ensure protection of threatened species and their habitats. Under the provisions of Section 38 of the National Biodiversity Act, 2002, the species which are on the verge of extinction or likely to become extinct in near future as threatened species, are notified. Ministry has already issued notifications for 14 states to this effect.

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats" has been modified in 2008-09 by including a new component namely "Recovery of Endangered Species" and 16 species have been identified for recovery viz. Snow Leopard, Bustard (including Floricans), Dolphin, Hangul, Nilgiri Tahr, Marine Turtles, Dugong, Edible Nest Swiftlet, Asian Wild Buffalo, Nicobar Megapode, Manipur Brow-antlered Deer, Vultures, Malabar Civet, Indian Rhinoceros, Asiatic Lion, Swamp Deer and Jerdon's Courser.

The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 has been enacted for protection of wild animals, birds and plants against hunting and commercial exploitation. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders. The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its products.

The funds allocated to the State/UT Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of 'Integrated Development of wildlife Habitat, 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' are as follows

`In lakhs

For State /UTs 2012-13 2013-14 2014-15

Integrated Development of wildlife Habitat 7489.48 6677.99 6588.99

Project Elephant 1796.53 1843.53 1767.43

Project Tiger 16062.50 16287.25 17228.81
